

Appl. No. 10/816,325
Amdt. dated January 12, 2010
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 3624

PATENT

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for deciding whether to make an item in-house or to buy the item from outside suppliers, the method comprising:

launching, with one or more processors associated with one or more computer systems, a workflow corresponding to a selected business process from a first interface associated with a computer for arriving at the make or buy decision, wherein launching the workflow includes configuring the one or more computers to enforce the selected business process; and

generating, with the one or more processors associated with one or more computer systems, information configured for displaying information on a second interface associated with a computer, the information indicative of a comparison between quantifications of the make decision and [(or)] the buy decision on a display device based on information obtained through enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow;

wherein enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow includes receiving the obtained information at the one or more computers systems in response to performing one or more actions according to a set of predetermined rules associated with the workflow, the one or more actions comprising:

forwarding, using at least one computer in a set of one or more computers, information that enables one or more workflow participants in a marketing department of an enterprise to generate a market specification describing the item to be made in-house or purchased from outside suppliers;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of one or more computers, the market specification from the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of one or more computers,
information estimating a market volume for the item described in the market specification from
the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

forwarding, using at least one computer in the set of one or more
computers, information that enables one or more workflow participants in a planning department
of the enterprise to derive a materials requirement plan from the generated market specification
and the estimated market volume;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, the material
equipment plan from the one or more workflow participants in the planning department;

forwarding, using at least one computer in the set of one or more
computers, information that enables one or more workflow participants in an engineering
department of the enterprise to develop an engineering specification defining the item from the
generated market specification;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, the engineering
specification from the one or more workflow participants in the engineering department;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, information
establishing a purchase price to buy the item from one or more workflow participants in a
purchasing department of the enterprise;

receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, information
estimating a unit cost for producing the item in-house from one or more workflow participants in
a costing department of the enterprise;

forwarding, using at least one computer in the set of computers,
information that enables the one or more workflow participants in the costing department to
determine a unit opportunity cost from the established purchase price to buy the item and the
estimated in-house unit cost;

forwarding, using at least one computer in the set of computers,
information that enables the one or more workflow participants in the costing department to
extend the unit opportunity cost by the quantity of the item specified in the material requirement
plan to determine a gross opportunity cost;

53 receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, information
54 estimating a cost of acquiring a production capacity to produce the item in-house from the one or
55 more workflow participants in a costing department of the enterprise; and
56 receiving, at at least one computer in the set of computers, information
57 determining to make the item in-house from the one or more workflow participants in a costing
58 department of the enterprise if a net present value of the gross opportunity cost is more than the
59 estimate cost of acquiring the production capacity, otherwise receiving, at the at least one
60 computer in the set of computers, information determining to buy the item from at least one of
61 the outside suppliers.

1 2. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
2 wherein receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers, the materials requirement
3 plan from the one or more workflow participants in the planning department includes receiving a
4 bill of materials detailing components and sub-components needed to build the item, current
5 inventory of the components and sub-components and an amount of the components and sub-
6 components that must be purchased, phased over time.

1 3. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
2 wherein receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers, the engineering
3 specification from the one or more workflow participants in the engineering department includes
4 receiving a technical description of the item and of any tooling, plant layout and materials
5 needed to produce the item.

1 4. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
2 wherein receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers, the information
3 establishing a purchase price to buy the item from one or more workflow participants in the
4 purchasing department includes at least one of:
5 receiving information indicating whether an item matching or substantially
6 matching requirements defined in the engineering specification is available from the outside
7 suppliers; and

receiving information placing the item defined in the engineering specification up
for bid by the outside suppliers.

5. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
wherein the workflow further includes receiving, at at least one computer in the set of one or
more computers, information indicative of a financial justification calculation, the financial
justification calculation being a difference between the net present value of the gross opportunity
costs and the estimated cost of acquiring the production capacity to produce the item in-house.

6. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
wherein based on a determination to make the item in-house, the workflow further including
receiving at at least one computer in the set of one or more computers, information scoring the
gross opportunity cost according to how aligned making the item in-house is with non-financial
criteria.

7. (Previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 1,
wherein receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers, information estimating
the unit cost for producing the item in-house includes receiving at least one of a cost of a plant
and equipment needed to manufacture the item, a factory layout cost, and a building cost.

8. (Original) The computer-implemented method of claim 6, wherein the
non-financial criteria include process technology advantage, tooling technology advantage,
volume and intellectual property protection.

9. (Currently amended) A machine-readable storage medium having data
stored thereon representing sequences of instructions executable by a computer for deciding
whether to make an item in-house or to buy the item from outside suppliers, the machine-
readable storage medium comprising:

instructions for launching a workflow corresponding to a selected business
process for arriving at the make or buy decision, wherein the instructions for launching the

workflow includes instructions for configuring the computer to enforce the selected business process; and

instructions for generating information ~~indicative of~~ configured for displaying a comparison between quantifications of the make decision and ~~[[or]]~~ the buy decision based on information obtained through enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow;

wherein instructions for enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow includes instructions for receiving the obtained information at the one or more computers systems in response to performing one or more actions according to a set of predetermined rules associated with the workflow, the one or more actions comprising:

instructions for forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in a marketing department of an enterprise to generate a market specification describing the item to be made in-house or purchased from outside suppliers;

instructions for receiving the market specification from the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

instructions for receiving information estimating a market volume for the item described in the market specification from the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

instructions for forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in a planning department of the enterprise to derive a materials requirement plan from the generated market specification and the estimated market volume;

instructions for receiving the material equipment plan from the one or more workflow participants in the planning department;

instructions for forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in an engineering department of the enterprise to develop an engineering specification defining the item from the generated market specification;

instructions for receiving the engineering specification from the one or more workflow participants in the engineering department;

35 ~~instructions for~~ receiving information establishing a purchase price to buy
36 the item from one or more workflow participants in a purchasing department of the enterprise;
37 ~~instructions for~~ receiving information estimating a unit cost for producing
38 the item in-house from one or more workflow participants in a costing department of the
39 enterprise;
40 ~~instructions for~~ forwarding information that enables the one or more
41 workflow participants in the costing department to determine a unit opportunity cost from the
42 established purchase price to buy the item and the estimated in-house unit cost;
43 ~~instructions for~~ forwarding information that enables the one or more
44 workflow participants in the costing department to extend the unit opportunity cost by the
45 quantity of the item specified in the material requirement plan to determine a gross opportunity
46 cost;
47 ~~instructions for~~ receiving information estimating a cost of acquiring a
48 production capacity to produce the item in-house from the one or more workflow participants in
49 a costing department of the enterprise; and
50 ~~instructions for~~ receiving information determining to make the item in-
51 house from the one or more workflow participants in a costing department of the enterprise if a
52 net present value of the gross opportunity cost is more than the estimate cost of acquiring the
53 production capacity, otherwise receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers,
54 information determining to buy the item from at least one of the outside suppliers.

1 10. (Currently amended) A computer system for making a decision whether
2 to make an item in-house or to buy the item from outside suppliers, comprising:
3 a processor;
4 at least one data storage device coupled to the processor;
5 a plurality of processes spawned by said at least one processor, the processes
6 including processing logic for:

launching a workflow corresponding to a selected business process for arriving at the make or buy decision, wherein launching the workflow includes configuring the processor to enforce the selected business process; and

generating information ~~indicative of~~ configured for displaying a comparison between quantifications for the make decision and the [[or]] buy decision based on information obtained through enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow;

wherein enforcement of the selected business process through the workflow includes receiving the obtained information at the one or more computers systems in response to performing one or more actions according to a set of predetermined rules associated with the workflow, the one or more actions comprising:

forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in a marketing department of an enterprise to generate a market specification describing the item to be made in-house or purchased from outside suppliers;

receiving the market specification from the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

receiving information estimating a market volume for the item described in the market specification from the one or more workflow participants in the marketing department;

forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in a planning department of the enterprise to derive a materials requirement plan from the generated market specification and the estimated market volume;

receiving the material equipment plan from the one or more workflow participants in the planning department;

forwarding information that enables one or more workflow participants in an engineering department of the enterprise to develop an engineering specification defining the item from the generated market specification;

receiving the engineering specification from the one or more workflow participants in the engineering department;

36 receiving information establishing a purchase price to buy the item;
37 receiving information estimating a unit cost for producing the item in-
38 house from one or more workflow participants in a costing department of the enterprise;
39 forwarding information that enables the one or more workflow
40 participants in the costing department to determine a unit opportunity cost from the established
41 purchase price to buy the item and the estimated in-house unit cost;
42 forwarding information that enables the one or more workflow
43 participants in the costing department to extend the unit opportunity cost by the quantity of the
44 item specified in the material requirement plan to determine a gross opportunity cost;
45 receiving information estimating a cost of acquiring a production capacity
46 to produce the item in-house from the one or more workflow participants in a costing department
47 of the enterprise; and
48 receiving information determining to make the item in-house from the one
49 or more workflow participants in a costing department of the enterprise if a net present value of
50 the gross opportunity cost is more than the estimate cost of acquiring the production capacity,
51 otherwise receiving, at the at least one computer in the set of computers, information determining
52 to buy the item from at least one of the outside suppliers.

11.-15 (Canceled)